

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION  
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SAYS CONDITIONS THREATEN  
WILD FOWL EXTERMINATION

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Present conditions tend surely toward extermination of our waterfowl and we must without delay take more effective steps to preserve these birds, declared W. C. Henderson, associate chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in an address at the annual meeting of the National Association of Audubon Societies in New York City, October 30.

The waterfowl situation in North America, Mr. Henderson described as "a vastly reduced supply of wild fowl sought by a greatly increased number of hunters more effectively armed and equipped." We must adjust ourselves, he said, to a period of changed conditions and admit that the generous hunting privileges formerly enjoyed are a thing of the past. Our immediate concern, he pointed out, is to conserve an adequate seed stock of the birds, and to insure this result we must reduce the annual kill.

Establishing bird refuges is an essential in conservation, said Mr. Henderson, but he characterized sanctuaries as of secondary importance in the present emergency. The acquisition and establishment of refuges is a slow process at best, and it is not possible, he explained, to acquire sufficient refuge areas in time to meet the present need of the birds even if unlimited funds were available. "We cannot save ducks today," he said, "by promises of aid in the future."

Mr. Henderson mentioned baiting as a practice opposed by many conservationists, including an increasing number of sportsmen. Twelve trained men of the Biological Survey, he told, are now observing the abundance of the birds on the principal concentration areas, studying the effect of baiting practices, and gathering information on other matters connected with wildfowling.

Reducing natural enemies to save game birds for man's use, said Mr. Henderson, is "not nearly so simple as it seems." Speaking of damage by the crow as an example, he said that it is not reasonable to suppose that the greatest possible success in anti-crow campaigns alone would increase waterfowl enough to balance the losses occasioned by shooting, as long as the ducks are subjected to the present rate of kill.

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